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ABSTRACT

Annotations of twenty English placement tests are presented, providing for each a general description, information on content, publication of results, diagnostic capabilities, and predictability. Tests are arranged in three categories: (1) standardized English placement tests, including The College English Placement Test, Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (regular and self-scoring editions), Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Cooperative English Tests, Descriptive Tests of Language Skills, English Composition Test, Junior College Placement Program, McGraw-Hill Basic Skills Program (Writing Test), Missouri College English Test, Purdue High School English Test, Stanford Test of Academic Skills, Test of Standard Written English; (2) college designed English placement tests, including Skyline College's English Composition Writing Sample, Hake's Essay Examination, Chabot College's Individual Study Plan, Mercyhurst College Diagnostic Pre-Test, Canada College's The Writing Sample; and (3) textbook and programmed sequence tests, including Harbrace Diagnostic Tests and Individualized English Set H. An analysis is given regarding which tests diagnose specific writing problems, how results are reported, what is actually being tested, and whether tests validly predict student achievement. (LH)

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SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

BASIC SKILLS PROJECT

ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS: A STUDY

JANUARY, 1978

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE..... 1

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION 1

FINDINGS

Which Tests are Diagnostic? 4

How are Results Reported? 9

What is Actually Being Tested? 11

Do the Tests Validly Predict Student Achievement?.....13

RECOMMENDATIONS.....13

ANNOTATIONS STANDARDIZED ENGLISH PLACEMENT TESTS

The College English Placement.....15

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program.....20

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (Self-Scoring).....22

Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.....24

Cooperative English Tests.....26

Descriptive Tests of Language Skills.....28

English Composition Test.....31

Junior College Placement Program.....33

McGraw-Hill Basic Skills Program: Writing Test.....35

Missouri College English Test.....38

Purdue High School English Test.....40

Stanford Test of Academic Skills.....42

Test of Standard Written English.....44

COLLEGE DESIGNED TESTS

Skyline College's English Composition Writing Sample...46

Hake's Essay Examination.....49

Chabot College's Individual Study Plan.....51

Mercyhurst College Diagnostic Pre-Test.....52

Canada College's The Writing Sample.....54

TEXTBOOK AND PROGRAMMED SEQUENCE TESTS

Harbrace Diagnostic Tests.....55

Individualized English Set H.....58

APPENDICIES

Appendix A 63

Appendix B 64

Appendix C 65

Appendix D 66

Appendix E 67

Appendix F 68

Appendix G 69

Appendix H 70

Appendix I 71

Appendix J 72

Appendix K 73

Appendix L 74

Appendix M 75

Appendix N 76

Appendix O 77

Appendix P 78

Appendix Q 79

Appendix R 80

Appendix S 81

Appendix T 82

Appendix U 83

Appendix V 85

ENGLISH PLACEMENT EXAMINATION: A STUDY

PURPOSE

Phase I of the Basic Skills Project in English analyzed the English testing and placement systems within the San Mateo County Community College District. This analysis yielded two testing criteria: (1) placement tests should diagnose specific problems in order to enable the instructor to determine the specific writing strengths and weaknesses of each student, and (2) the results of the tests should be presented in a manner which makes the data easily understood by both student and instructor.

None of the English placement tests within the district adequately satisfies these two-important testing criteria.

The purpose of this study is to review English placement examinations in order to identify those tests which diagnose specific writing problems and which present test results in a clear, easily understood manner.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

In order to identify tests which meet these criteria, the following procedure was used:

Volumes I and II of the Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook* were consulted to determine which English placement tests were available and suitable for community college use.

Representatives of various test publishers were consulted to determine whether tests were under construction or had been constructed since 1972, the publication date of the Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook. Among the publishers consulted were:

College Entrance Examination Board (Nathaniel Allyn)
800 Welch Road
Palo Alto, California 94304

California Test Bureau (John Stewart)
McGraw-Hill
Del Monte Research Park
Monterey, California 93940

Education Testing Service (Edward Tibby)
1947 Center Street
Berkeley, California 94704

* The Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook, I & II, ed. Oscar Krisen Buros (Highland Park, New Jersey: The Gryphon Press, 1972).

Harcourt Brace Javanovich (Jane Simmons)
1250 Sixth Avenue
San Diego, California 92102

Houghton Mifflin (Lynn Burntson)
777 California Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94304

Science Reasearch Associates, Inc. (Nelson Noggle)
259 East Erie Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Specimen and actual tests were obtained and subjected to the following criteria:

What skills are actually being tested?

Is the test diagnostic? (Does it concretely identify a student's writing strengths and weaknesses?)

How are results presented? (Are they presented so that both student and teacher can, with little difficulty, recognize specific strengths and weaknesses?)

Does the test validly predict student achievement? (Statistics will be gathered where available.)

TESTS STUDIED

The tests analyzed fall into three categories: standardized English placement Tests; diagnostic textbook tests and programmed sequence tests; and college designed standardized English placement tests.

Haugh, Oscar M. and James I. The College English Placement Test. Palo Alto, California: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969.

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service. 1975.

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (self-scoring). Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, 1976.

Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Expanded Edition, Level 4 Form S. Monterey, California: McGraw-Hill, 1973.

Cooperative English Tests, Form 1A. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, 1960.

Descriptive Tests of Language Skills: Usage, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Reading Comprehension, and Logical Relationships. Princeton, New Jersey: College Entrance Examination Board, 1977.

English Composition Test. Princeton, New Jersey: College-Level Examination Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, 1977.

English Composition Test. Princeton, New Jersey: College-Level Examination Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, 1962.

Junior College Placement Program, Form A. Chicago, Illinois: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1968.

Raygor, Alton L. McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System Writing Test. Monterey, California: McGraw-Hill, 1970.

Callis, Robert and Willoughby Johnson. Missouri College English Test. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965.

Remmers, H. H., R. D. Franklin, G. S. Wykoff, and J. M. McKee. The Purdue High School English Test. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963.

Callis, Robert, Jack C. Merwin, and Richard Madden. Stanford Test of Academic Skills, College IIA. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1974.

Test of Standard Written English. Princeton, New Jersey. Admissions Testing Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, 1975.

II. DIAGNOSTIC TEXTBOOK TESTS AND PROGRAMMED SEQUENCE TESTS

Graham, Sheila Y. Diagnostic Tests to Accompany the Harbrace College Handbook and the Harbrace College Workbook. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1977.

Hook, J. N. and William H. Evans. Individualized English Set H. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1974.

III. COLLEGE DESIGNED TESTS

Skyline College. English Composition Writing Sample. San Bruno, California: Skyline College, 1977.

Hake, Rosemary. Essay Examination. Chicago State University.

Chabot College. Individual Study Plan. Hayward, California: Chabot College, South County Junior College, 1975.

Mercyhurst College Diagnostic Pre-Test. Erie, Pennsylvania:

Canada College. Writing Sample. Redwood City, California: Canada College, 1974.

FINDINGS

1. Which Tests are Diagnostic?

The tests that examine basic writing skills fall into three categories: objective English placement tests designed and standardized (normed) to measure writing skills for English course placement; objective diagnostic tests designed to point out specific weaknesses in skills discussed in textbooks or programmed individualized sequences of concepts and writing assignments; and college-designed essay tests evaluated by specific curriculum based criteria.

Of the standardized English placement tests, the experimental form of the battery of Descriptive Tests of Language Skills developed by the Educational Testing Service for the College Board is the only placement instrument designed to report specific weaknesses and strengths in student writing.

Five tests comprise the battery of Descriptive Tests of Language Skills: Usage, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Reading Comprehension, and Logical Relationships.

Of the five tests, three--Usage, Sentence Structure, and Logical Relationships--measure skills related to writing. The Usage Test examines the following principles:

Pronouns (reference and case)
Verbs
  Subject-verb agreement
  Verb forms
Modifiers
  Adjective/Adverb
Diction and Idioms

The Sentence Structure Test measures the following:

Complete Sentences
  Sentence fragments
  Two sentences run together
  Two sentences separated by a comma
Coordinating and subordinating conjunctions
Misplaced modifiers

The Logical Relationships Test measures the ability of students to organize and to see how ideas are related. This test measures these principles by requiring students to perform the following activities:

Categorize ideas
Use appropriate connectives
Make analogies
Recognize principles of organization

Like most other objective writing tests, the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills examines the grammatical and mechanical aspects of writing. It should be pointed out, however, that this test does not directly examine capitalization and punctuation.

Each of these three tests may be taken on a two-page self-scoring answer sheet designed to give the instructor and the student immediate results. After completing the test, the student separates the two-page answer sheet where the correct marks have been made within various geometric figures representing the skills that appear on the test. The student counts the correct marks of each geometric figure and records the number of correct answers in the space provided. (See Appendix M). The instructor and student can then look at the total number of correct answers as well as the total number of items testing a particular skill and determine how well that student has mastered that skill. For example, if a student scores 5 on a skill tested by 13 items, the instructor and the student may interpret this score as an indication of a need for further study.

The Written Expression Test of the Comparative Guidance and Placement Self-scoring Battery utilizes the same scoring technique, but warns against using the results for diagnostic purposes, because there are too few items testing stated principles to provide reliable results. To test verbs, for example, the publishers include only two items.

Although the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills is the only standardized diagnostic placement test currently available, some of the other tests do have diagnostic possibilities. However, these tests both need to include more items for each principle to provide reliable results as well as to modify their reporting techniques. The College English Placement Test, the McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System: Writing Test, the Stanford Test of Academic Skills, the Missouri College English Test, and the Cooperative English Test provide a list of the basic skills covered by the items on their tests. While these tests key each item to the skill covered by the test, they do not report scores for each skill. If they did report scores for each skill tested, the student and the teacher would be able to discern the student's weaknesses or strengths in each skill. For example, if the student missed six of ten items designed to test subject-verb agreement, the instructor and the student would know if additional study of this skill were needed.

The McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System: Writing Test, the Comprehensive Basic Skills Test, and the Purdue High School English Test report scores for each broad area tested. Because these areas cover more than one skill, the score only gives the instructor a general idea of the student's abilities in these areas. For example, the "Language Mechanics" section of the McGraw-Hill Test covers capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. No individual score is given for each of these sub-sections, only a total score. Therefore, the score only gives the instructor a general idea of the student's abilities in these areas. Therefore, the instructor does not know from the total score whether the student is weak or strong in punctuation, capitalization, or grammar.

Chabot College's Individual Study Plan, the Harbrace College Diagnostic Tests, and the Individualized English Set H offer examples of objective tests designed to diagnose specific weaknesses that correspond to textbooks or individualized sequences of concepts and writing assignments.

Chabot College's Individual Study Plan offers an example of an objective test designed to diagnose specific weaknesses that correspond to an individualized sequence of concepts and writing assignments presented in their Writing Center: English 100W. However, the diagnostic capabilities of this test are limited to sentence recognition (fragments and run-together sentences), subject-verb agreement, verb-tense consistency, and comma usage--the skills emphasized in the Writing Center. Individual scores are presented for each of the areas tested so that the teacher and the student know whether additional work is required.

The Diagnostic Tests to Accompany the Harbrace College Handbook and the Harbrace College Workbook correspond to to the six areas of composition offered in these tests: Grammar, Mechanics, Punctuation, Spelling and Diction, Effective Sentences, and Larger Elements (Paragraphs and Organization).

Their diagnostic capabilities, however, are limited to these areas. It should be pointed out that the frequent allusions to Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels used in the exercises may be distracting to the student in need of remedial work. Moreover, the reading level of the exercises may be too difficult for these students.

Of the textbook individualized sequence tests, the Individualized English Set H is the most comprehensive. It tests for eighty-eight principles of English grammar and mechanics, and reports scores for each of these.

Of the College-designed essay tests, Rosemary Hake's Essay Examination, Skyline College's English Composition Essay Sample, and Canada College's Writing Sample provide examples of subjective tests designed to diagnose specific strengths and weaknesses in student writing by using curriculum based criteria to evaluate the students' essays.

The Hake method of evaluating an essay requires the grader to use criteria divided into four dimensions. Dimension One reflects the structural whole of the essay (whether the essay has an introduction, a thesis sentence, topic sentences, conclusion); and Dimensions Two, Three, and Four cover essay, paragraph and statement continuity; mechanics and usage; and punctuation, respectively. The scores for Hake's examination are reported in two parts--a score for Dimension One and a total score for Dimensions Two, Three, and Four. For example, a score may be reported as 4-32; the four indicating flaws in Dimension One--the structural whole of the essay--and the 32 representing the total number of errors in paragraph and statement continuity, mechanics and usage, and punctuation--Dimensions Two, Three, and Four.

From this score, however, the instructor is not able to determine what the specific weaknesses are. To determine specifically what the problems are, the instructor has to look to the essay itself.

Skyline College, as of Fall 1977, and Canada College, since Fall 1975, use criteria directly related to the content of their writing courses to evaluate their sample essays. At Skyline College, this content is divided into four areas:

I. Content: adherence to topic; complexity of ideas; logic substance; support for generalizations; use of specifics and examples; conclusions.
II. Organization: clarity, coherence and interrelatedness of paragraphs and sentences.
III. Mechanics: spelling; diction; grammar; sentence structure.
IV. Length: development and completeness of ideas.

Using these four general areas, the Skyline English faculty developed specific criteria which reflect course content for each of their four English skill levels. For example, at Skyline, the essay that is assigned to English 1A meets the following criteria:

I. Content: strong in all areas; may be allowed some lack of specifics since that has been traditionally an area that 1A must teach; takes the ideas beyond obvious or automatic responses.
II. Organization: clear sense of transitions and of general movement from point to point.
III. Mechanics: some minor errors allowable, but overall should have some strong sense of mechanics.
IV. Length: whatever the length of the paper, it should project a sense of having dealt with the ideas in a way that says as much as can be said, given the limiting of the topic which the student adopts.

At Canada, the content is also divided into four areas:

I. Development: adequate details, illustrations, and reasons to establish the validity of an idea.
II. Organization: a definite starting point, proceeding in a logical sequence to a specific end.
III. Paragraphing: recognition of relationships between ideas and differences between generalties and specifics.
IV. Mechanical errors: errors in punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure.

The essay that is given English 1A status must be strong in all of the features described above.

Using curriculum based criteria to evaluate the essay test, the student and teacher can ascertain the specific compositional aspects of writing the student has mastered, but they can not ascertain the specific problems in mechanics and grammar the student has, for specific mechanical and grammatical problems are not delineated.

With the exception of the new experimental Descriptive Tests of Language Skills, the standardized objective tests studied lack diagnostic capabilities for two reasons: 1) the publishers do not group items testing specific skills so that a score reflecting the strengths or weaknesses of a student in a specific skill can be reported and 2) the publishers include too few items to provide reliable diagnosis.

The objective tests designed to diagnose specific weaknesses that correspond to textbook or programmed individualized sequences of concepts and writing assignments do have these capabilities. However, these tests limit themselves to the skills in their sequences, mainly grammatical and mechanical in nature. The most comprehensive of these tests is the Individualized English Set H.

A study of college designed essay tests and the curriculum based criteria used to evaluate them reveals that these criteria measure both the creative and mechanical aspects of writing. However, the reporting methods for most essay tests do not include specific reports on grammar and mechanics.

It should seem, then, that the most common kinds of testing instruments--essay tests and the objective tests--are limited: the objective tests only examine and report scores for grammar and mechanics, and the essay test only reports scores for the compositional aspects of writing. The limitations of each of these types of tests would suggest that the most comprehensive method of determining the strengths and weaknesses of student writing is an objective test and a writing sample.

2. How Are Results Reported?

The methods used for presenting test results are percentile rank, stanines, scale scores, grade equivalents, and raw scores. The most frequently used method is percentile rank; the least utilized method is raw scores. In order for the teacher or student to understand the scores reported by either of these methods, the following principles of each method must be understood.

Percentile Rank: A student's percentile may be interpreted as the percentage of students in the norm group that scored lower than that particular student. The problem with this method of reporting is twofold: 1) the group that is used as a norm group may be different in composition from the group to which the student belongs, and 2) percentile rank does not indicate specific strengths or weaknesses of students in a particular skill, only a relative strength or weakness.

Stanine: A stanine is a value on a nine-point scale of normalized standard scores. Scores are expressed along a scale ranging from a low of 1 to a high of 9, with the value 5 representing the average performance for the norm group. The stanine yields approximately the same information as a percentile rank does in that it indicates the relative standing of a student compared to a norm group. It, therefore, does not reflect a specific weakness or strength.

Standard Scores (Scale Scores): Scale scores are based on the normal distribution curve; therefore, these scores do not have meaning for users unless the users have a thorough grasp of the normal distribution curve.

Grade Equivalents: The grade equivalent for a particular raw score represents the year and month of school for which that raw score is the median. For example, if the median raw score for all students in the fourth month of the ninth grade (9.4) is 30 on a given test, then the grade equivalent of a raw score of 30 on that test is 9.4. However, a score of 9.4 by a student in the sixth grade does not mean that student has mastered all of the information that is taught in the curriculum of that subject up to the fourth month of the ninth grade. It means only that on this particular test the number of items that the student answered correctly is equal to the median number of items answered correctly by all students in the norming group in the fourth month of the ninth grade.

Raw Scores: The raw score on a particular test indicates the total actual number of correct items scored by a student on a particular test. This number is usually converted to percentile rank, stanines, scale scores, or grade equivalents.

Percentile rank, stanines, scale scores, and grade equivalents all present the same problems to the teacher and the student. 1) Most teachers and students do not understand specifically what the scores mean when reported as percentile rank, stanines, or grade equivalents. 2) Scores reflect a comparison of a particular student's performances with the performances of other students. The scores do not reflect specifically the strengths and weaknesses of a specific student in a particular subject or skill, only a relative weakness compared to students in the norm group.

The raw score or the raw score reported as a percentage of the total number of items on a given test is the one method of reporting that appears to give the performance of the student on a particular test. The raw score gives an indication of a student's mastery or lack of mastery of a particular skill. For example a test on subject-verb agreement may have thirty items. Seventy-percent or twenty-one of these items may be indicated as the mastery level of this particular item. The student who falls below this percentage or raw score of twenty-one would demonstrate a need for further study of this item. A student who correctly answers seventy percent or twenty-one of the thirty items would receive a score of seventy-percent. This score would reflect to the teacher and student that that student on that particular test had mastered seventy-percent of the knowledge to use subject and verb correctly.

3. What is Actually Being Tested?

An item by item analysis of the tests reveals the most frequently tested skills of English composition are:

Grammar
- Verbs
  - Tense (shift)
  - Principal parts
  - Agreement with subject
- Pronoun
  - Agreement (number) (case)
- Punctuation
  - Commas
    - Restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, phrases
    - Comma splices
    - Items in a series
  - Periods
    - Omissions, creating run-on sentences
    - Unnecessary, creating short, choppy sentences or fragments
  - Quotation marks
    - Titles
    - Direct quotes
  - Apostrophes
    - Ownership
    - Contractions
- Capitalization

- Sentence Sense
  - Transitions
  - Idioms
  - Sentence types
  - Misplaced modifiers
  - Parallelism
  - Wordiness
  - Diction
- Spelling
- Paragraph and Essay Skills
  - Topic sentences
  - Organization
  - Revelant details

Not all tests examine all of these skills. An examination of the tests shows grammar (verb usuage and pronoun usuage), punctuation, and capitalization are the skills most tests cover. Sentence sense, diction, paragraph skill are the skills least likely to be covered in the standardized tests. In fact, of the tests studied only the College English Placement Test, the Test of Standard Written English, the English Composition Test, the McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System: Writing Test, the Stanford Test of Academic Skills, and the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills contain items to test these skills often at the exclusion of one or more of the skills above. For example, the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills includes most of the items, but does not include capitalization and punctuation.

Houghton Mifflin's College English Placement Test is the only objective test analyzed that parallels the actual writing process of selecting a topic, organizing the ideas, writing the first draft, and revising the rough draft. It should be pointed out, however, that the items on this test assume the student has had much practice in writing. For this reason, this test, as it is presently constructed, is probably too difficult for most students who enter the community college. This test would best be given to the student who has completed a preparatory course in English composition.

The three college essay tests--Hake's Essay Examination, Skyline College's English Composition Writing Sample, and Canada College's Writing Sample--provide the means of examining grammatical as well as compositional aspects of writing.

It is interesting to note that the most recent of these tests is the College Entrance Examination Board's Descriptive Test of Language Skills which is still the process of being refined. The other tests are from two years (the Comparative Guidance and Placement Program was published in 1975 *) to seventeen years old (the Cooperative English Test was first published in 1960). This test is currently being used at the College of San Mateo as one of its means of placement. The Comparative Guidance and Placement Program is used at Skyline College.

4. Do the Tests Validly Predict Student Achievement?

Comparable reliability statistics for each of the tests analyzed are not available because some publishers provided no statistics and others used different methods of computing their reliability.

The most often used methods to determine the consistency between the scores of students and their achievement are reliability studies using split-half estimates based on odd-even items corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula (r_{1_1}) or the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 ($r_{KR_{20}}$) and a standard error of measurement.

The results of these studies show reliability coefficients of .93 to .94 with standard errors of measurements of 3.5 to 5.5.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of an analysis of the placement methods used within the district during Phase I of the Basic Skills Project, it was recommended that all three colleges adopt the same method of placement. It was further recommended that this method of placement contain a writing sample and an objective diagnostic test.

In order to identify tests that are diagnostic, this study was made. Consequently, the following recommendations are being made:

_____ A district-wide consensus on writing skills in basic, developmental, and transfer English courses must be reached.

* The Self-scoring version of this test was copyrighted a year later in 1976.

After this agreement is reached, a committee composed of representatives from the English divisions, counselors, deans of instruction from all three campuses select an objective test and the criteria by which to evaluate the sample essay.

To select the evaluation criteria for the sample essay, it is recommended that the committee examine the criteria used to evaluate the essay tests developed by Canada and Skyline Colleges to determine the extent to which each of these sets of criteria measure the agreed upon skill. These sets of criteria should be synthesized or otherwise modified if found to be inadequate.

To select the objective test, it is recommended that the committee examine the battery of tests that comprise the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills developed by the Educational Testing Service and the diagnostic tests designed to accompany the Individualized English Set H program.

After the committee determines which of these instruments is adequate or can be modified, that instrument be adopted as a trial diagnostic placement instrument for the community colleges of the San Mateo County Community College District. However, if these instruments are found inadequate, this committee should design an objective test to measure the district-wide agreed upon skills. Items of this test should be keyed so as to allow scores to be reported for each skill tested. Raw scores or percentages of raw scores should be the method used to report scores.

ANNOTATIONS

Haugh, Oscar M. and James I. The College English Placement Test. Palo Alto, California: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969.

The College English Placement Test (CEPT) consists of an objective test (Part I) and a sample essay (Part II). Part II is a directed theme writing test with two essays. The first essay is written on one of two topics designed to provoke a ready response; the second, on a topic that requires some reflection.

Part I of the College English Placement Test is developed to parallel the steps in writing a composition--selecting a topic, organizing ideas, writing the first draft, and revising the first draft. It consists of 106 items designed to be completed in forty-five minutes. These items are divided into two main headings: 1) Organization and 2) Style. The following table of specifications shows the aspects covered by Part I.

TABLE OF SPECIFICATIONS

I. Organization (Items 1-39)

A. Selecting a suitable subject (1,2)

1. Preferring subject involving firsthand experience
2. Limiting subject to fit available space

B. Planning the composition (3-25,36)

1. Listing pertinent ideas
2. Refining the initial list
   a. To identify main ideas
   b. To identify subordinate ideas
   c. To eliminate irrelevant ideas

C. Writing the first draft (26-35, 37-39)

1. Ordering materials to reveal important relationships
2. Ordering sentences in logical sequence
3. Supplying appropriate transitions

II. Style (Items 40-106)

A. Writing unified sentences, avoiding fragments and run-ons (96-97)

B. Writing coherent sentences (40-47, 50-51)

1. Making coherent sentences (40-47, 50-51)
2. Placing modifiers appropriately
3. Making explicit pronoun referents
4. Avoiding dangling constructions
5. Avoiding faulty comparison
6. Avoiding faulty predication
7. Avoiding faulty coordination

C. Writing effective sentences (45-46, 48-51)

1. Avoiding strung-together sentences
2. Preferring active to passive voice
3. Subordinating less important ideas
4. Expressing ideas succinctly

D. Selecting the appropriate word (52-79)

1. Selecting the right word
2. Selecting the precise synonym
3. Selecting words with connotations suited to the writer's purpose

E. Observing the conventions of standard English idiom (80-106)

1. Following standard patterns of usage
   a. Using standard verb forms
   b. Using case forms properly
   c. Securing agreement between
      (1) Subject and verb
      (2) Pronoun and antecedent
   d. Following standard patterns with modifiers
   e. Using the idomatic preposition
2. Following standard practice in spelling
3. Following standard practice in punctuation
4. Following standard practice in capitalization

CONTENT

Part I of the College English Placement Test consists of thirteen sub-sections.

Section I consists of two questions designed to test the ability of students to select a suitable topic while considering space limitations. Students are given two tasks: 1) to choose from a list of five topics, the topic that could be handled best in an essay of 500 words, and 2) to choose from a list of five topics, the topic which could be handled best in a research paper of 5000 words.

Section II consists of two sets of items designed to test students' abilities to organize. Thirteen items are in the first set of items. Students are asked to look at each item and determine if that item is:

A - A Main Topic
B - A Subtopic
C - Irrelevant in relation to the stated topic

Ten items are in the second group. Here students are asked to determine if each item belongs in one of four stated groups.

Section III and IV are designed to test students' abilities to perceive important relationships and to arrange sentences in a logical sequence.

Section III provides students with six sets of six items. They have to decide for each set which item should be first, second, third, etc.

Section IV directs students to rearrange ten sentences into a "clear, understandable theme of two paragraphs". They are then required to indicate which sentence should begin the theme, which sentence should begin the first and second paragraphs, and which sentence to conclude the theme. They must also decide which sentence is irrelevant and which sentence does not contain a transitional expression.

Section V tests students' abilities to choose appropriate transitions. Students are given two sentences which are divided into two parts. They are asked to select the appropriate transition from a list.

Section VI tests students' abilities to construct effective sentences. Students are given four versions of the same idea. They must choose the sentence which expresses the idea most effectively. There are eight sentences in this section.

Section VII tests the abilities of students to construct effective sentences. They are given choppy, repetitious sentences and then asked to choose from four sentences the sentence which most effectively expresses the idea in the combined choppy sentences.

Section VIII tests the abilities of students to choose the best word to express an idea. They are required to complete ten analogous sentences by choosing the best word from a list of five words. There are ten sentences in this group.

Sections IX, X, and XI examine the abilities of a student to distinguish between the meanings of words with similar meanings.

Section IX requires students to complete four sentences by choosing one of six synonyms.

Section X requires students to indicate if the underlined word creates a favorable or unfavorable impression. There are eight items in this section.

Section XI provides students with five sentences using synonyms. They are then asked questions requiring recognition of the subtle differences in meanings between the synonyms.

Section XII provides students with a fictionalized infinitive of a verb form and all of its principal parts. They are asked to select the appropriate form to complete each of six sentences. This fictionalized word tests the students' abilities to recognize the various verb forms.

Section XIII tests the students' abilities to use standard English usage, specifically capitalization, verb forms, punctuation, and spelling. The specific grammatical and mechanics principles tested are:

Pronoun
  Agreement (case) (number)
Adverb/adjective
Verb (principal parts)
Punctuation
  Apostrophes
  Periods
Spelling

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

As it currently reports scores, the College English Placement Test can not be used as a diagnostic instrument. However, it could be used as a diagnostic tool if separate scores were reported for each of the sections and subsections. The instructor would then have an idea if students were strong or weak in the two major divisions of the test as well as the specific area of weakness as indicated in the Table of Specifications (See page 15). To obtain a more detailed report of a students' weaknesses and strengths, the instructor could look to separate scores for each of the subsections: selecting a subject, planning the composition, writing the first draft, writing unified or coherent sentences, selecting the appropriate word or observing the conventions of the standard English idiom.

It should be pointed out, however, that there may not be enough items in some of the sections to provide reliable results. Moreover, this test probably would be very difficult for the average student who enters the community college, for it assumes that the student has had some practice in writing. This test would be best suited for the student who has completed a preparatory course in English composition.

Although the College English Placement Test consists of a sample essay (Part II), the publishers of the test do not provide any criteria by which to evaluate or score the essay.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The results of this test are reported by converting a total raw score to percentile ranks. Norms have been provided for four year and two-year colleges.

RELIABILITY

Using the Spearman-Brown formula, the publishers report a reliability coefficient of .936.

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program. Princeton, New Jersey: College Entrance Examination Board, 1973

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (CGP), designed to help freshmen at two-year colleges and vocational-technical institutes to plan their courses and careers, consists of a battery of inventories and tests for gathering information about students' abilities, interests, and needs.

The inventories, designed to indicate students' interests and needs, are a Biographical Inventory and a Comparative Interest Index. The Biographical Inventory asks students to give pertinent information about themselves and their backgrounds. The Comparative Interest Index elicits information about their interests in eleven academic and vocational fields.

The Reading, Sentences, and Mathematics tests, measure students' abilities to use these basic skills. Students' abilities to follow complicated directions, their perceptual speed and accuracy, and their skills in inductive reasoning in a non-verbal context are measured by instruments titled, "The Year 2000", "Mosaic Comparison", and "Letter Groups", respectively.

Since this study is primarily concerned with how the placement examination is used to help place students in English composition classes, a closer look at the sections of the examination testing the basic writing skills is presented.

CONTENT

In the Reading Test the students are given twenty-five minutes to read eight selections and answer thirty-five questions designed to test the students' abilities to comprehend, to recall, and to infer.

The Sentences Test consists of two parts:

Part I contains twenty items testing four grammatical principles to be completed in ten minutes. Students are asked to identify errors in:

Verbs
  Tense
  Subject-verb agreement
Pronouns
  Agreement (case) (number)
Dangling modifiers
Idioms
Transitions

Part II consists of twenty items to be completed in fifteen minutes. In order to complete the sentence most effectively, students are asked to choose from a list of four expressions. To make the best selection, students must be able to recognize the following:

Use of transitions (conjuctive adverbs)
Parallelism
Wordiness
Dangling modifiers
Pronoun-antecedent relationships
Verb tense

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The results of the tests are reported in two forms: scaled scores and percentile rank. The scale scores represent a common grading scale ranging from 20 for the lowest to 80 for the highest with 50 as the average score and a standard deviation of 10. The percentile ranks show how students' scores compare with the scores of specific norming groups of students. Each percentile rank corresponds to a specific scaled score and shows the percentage of students in a reference group whose scores were lower than the corresponding score. The testing college may choose the norm group.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

According to the publishers, students' scores on the Sentences Test reflect their abilities to write without errors serious enough to distort the intended meaning of a sentence. Therefore, any use of this test as a diagnostic tool is limited to an indication of the ability of a student to write a sentence without errors in the grammatical principles tested.

PREDICTABILITY

The publishers of the Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (CPG) provide a Performance Forecast for each student. This forecast represents the probability of students achieving certain levels of performance derived through validity studies using students' CGP scores and the grade-point average of former freshmen with similar CGP scores. The predictions are given as chances in 10 for performance. The publishers indicate that the predictions are arrived at a statistical procedure that takes into account the standard error of estimate. The publishers do not indicate precisely what this statistical procedure is or the standard error of estimate.

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program of the College Board Self-Scoring Placement Tests in English and Mathematics. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, 1975.

The self-scoring Comparative and Guidance and Placement tests battery contains six short tests: Reading, Written English Expression, Computation, Applied Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, and Intermediate Algebra.

Since this study is primarily concerned with how the placement examination is used to help place students in composition classes, a closser look at the Written English Expression test is presented.

The Written English Expression of the Comparative Guidance and Placement Program is designed to measure a student's ability to do the kind of writing usually required in colleges. The twenty-five minute test contains forty questions for which the student must choose the correct answers from four choices.

CONTENT

The Written English Expression Test is divided into two parts. Part I requires the student to read twenty sentences and identify errors in:

Verbs
  Tense
  Subject-verb agreement
Pronouns
  Agreement (case) (number)
Idioms (use of Prepositions)
Transitions

Part II consists of twenty items to be completed in fifteen minutes. The student is asked to choose from a list of four expressions in order to complete the sentence most effectively. In order to make the best selection, the student must be able to recognize the following:

Use of transitions (conjunctive adverbs)
Parallelism
Wordiness
Dangling modifiers
Pronoun-antecedent relationships
Verb tense

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Students who take any one of the self-scoring tests, write their answers on a specially designed two-page answer sheet which automatically transfers their marks onto the second sheet where the correct answers are indicated by rectangles. After completing the test, students count and record the number of correct answers. The students then refer to standard score and percentile rank conversion tables and record their scores as standard scores and percentile ranks. (See Appendix J)

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

According to the test publishers, these self-scoring placement test scores provide information intended to be predictive of performance in a college-entry writing course but do not provide diagnostic information. However, further interpretive information about students' abilities in each of the areas tested may be obtained by referring to the letters E (easy), M (medium), or D (difficult) in each rectangle which indicate the degree of difficulty of each item.*

Even more information about student abilities may be gained because, not only does the self-scoring answer sheet provide the degree of difficulty of each item, but it also provides a list of the items testing a particular skill. For example, the questions testing sentence recognition may be indicated by items 4, 8 10, and 21. The instructor need only count the responses to see how well the student performed in this area. The instructor, however, must be cautious in making any diagnostic interpretation, for the groups of items testing any particular skill contain too few items for reliable information.

PREDICTABILITY

The publishers report a reliability coefficient of .84 with a standard error of measurement of 2.75 according to the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 ($r_{KR_{20}}$).

*These items were labled "E" if more than 75 percent of the students used to norm the test answered a questions correctly; "M" if between 50 and 75 percent answered a question correctly; and "D" if fewer than 50 percent answered a question correctly.

Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Level 4 Form S, Expanded Edition. Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California: McGraw-Hill, 1973.

The Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, Expanded Edition, is a battery of six tests: Reading, Language, Reference Skills, Science, and Social Science. This study will concern itself with the Language Test only.

CONTENT

The Language Test consists of three separate tests: Spelling, Language Mechanics, and Language Expression. Time alloted for all three tests is seventy-four minutes.

To complete the Spelling Test, students are required to indicate the misspelled word in each of thirty sentences. The words were selected from Basic Goals in Spelling by W. Kottmeyer and A. Klaus and Basic Spelling Skills: A Program for Self Instruction by Learning Technology, Inc.

The Language Mechanics Test contains 20 items; ten measure punctuation and ten measure capitalization. Spaces between words within the sentences and marks of punctuation are underlined in the first ten sentences in this section. Students are required to choose from three marks of punctuation and a "Best as it is" to indicate his knowledge of punctuation.

Marks of punctuation tested are:

Question Marks
Commas
  After introductory clauses
  Restrictive and non-restrictive phrases
  Items in a series
Quotation marks (for emphasis)
Capitalization (the students indicate where capital letters belong in each of ten sentences.)

Principles tested are as follows:

Proper place names
Proper names

The Language Expression Test is designed to test standard English usage, diction, economy and clarity of expression, and paragraph organization. There are thirty-five items to be completed in thirty-seven minutes.

In the Standard English usage section the student must select the best verb, adjective, or relative pronoun to complete each of ten sentences.

Grammatical principles tested are:

- Verbs
  - Shift in tense
  - Subjective-very agreement
  - Principle parts
- Pronouns
  - Agreement (case) (number)
  - Relative pronouns
- Adjectives/adverbs
- Diction
- Pronoun

The student must determine which of four words best fits the blank in a given sentence to complete the diction section. In the economy and clarity of expression section, the student is required to select the most effective way of expressing the underlined portions of a sentence.

The Organizational skills are measured in two ways. Five items require the student to read a brief paragraph to determine which of four transitions reflects the relationship in thought between two sentences. Five other items require the student to examine several four sentence paragraphs to determine the logical order of the sentences within the paragraph.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

As this test is currently constructed, it is not a diagnostic instrument. It does not point out specific problems. It reports only a total score for the Language Test; yet this test covers spelling, punctuation, capitalization, diction, as well as organization of ideas. If separate scores were reported for each of the subskills listed under the Language Test, the instructor and the student would have some idea of the mastery of the skills in these areas. More items need to be included for each skill tested in order to provide reliability.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills scores are published in four forms: percentile rank, stanines, grade equivalents and expanded standard scores. On the Student Profile Sheet (Appendix) spaces are provided for entering these four interpretations for each test score and the total raw score for each student, which provide the instructor and the student with a choice of interpretations of the scores.

PREDICTABILITY

No report of a predictability study was provided.

Cooperative English Tests: English Expression, Form 1A. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, 1960.

The English Expression Test of the Cooperative English Tests is a forty minute test with two parts: 1) Effectiveness and 2) Mechanics.

CONTENT

Part I, Effectiveness, is designed to test students' ability to choose the written expression which precisely conveys the meaning intended. Twenty-two of the thirty items require the student to select words to complete the sentence. The remaining eight sentences require the student to select phrases to complete the sentences. The correct choice depends upon the student's knowledge of transitions, parallelism and concise language.

In Part II, Mechanics, students are given twenty-five minutes to identify errors, if any, in mechanics, grammar, punctuation, spelling and diction in sentences.

The errors indicated are:

Grammar

- Adjective/Adverbs
- Pronouns
  - Agreement (Case) (Number)
- Verbs
  - Subject-verb agreement
  - Tense
  - Principal parts
- Capitalization
- Punctuation
  - Comma (Comma splice, non-restrictive/ restrictive clauses)
  - Semicolon
  - Apostrophe
  - Quotation marks (direct and indirect quotations)
- Spelling
  - By rules
  - By observation
- Diction

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The scores for this test are reported in percentile rank and scaled scores.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

This test is accompanied by a manual which includes a table of the basic skills covered by the test. Also indicated is the number of each item which tests for each basic skill. If scores were reported for each group of items testing a specific skill, the teacher and student would be able to discern the student's weaknesses or strengths in that particular skill. However, the instructor would have to exercise caution because there are not enough items testing some skills to provide reliable results.

It should be noted that the diagnosis of a student's weakness is limited to the grammatical and mechanics skills listed above.

PREDICTABILITY

No predictability study is provided. Publishers suggest users develop their own.

College Entrance Examination Board. Descriptive Tests of Language Skills: Usage, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Reading Comprehension, and Logical Relationships, Experimental Version. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing System, 1977.

Five tests comprise the battery of Descriptive Tests of Language Skills: Usage, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Reading Comprehension, and Logical Relationships. The complete battery takes two hours and thirty-five minutes to complete.

CONTENT

The Usage Test consists of forty items to be completed in thirty minutes. The student is asked to read each sentence and find the error. Each place where an error may occur is underlined and labeled A through D.

The principles tested are as follows:

Pronouns (reference and case)
Verbs
  Subject-verb agreement
  Verb forms
Modifiers
  Adjective/Adverb
Diction and Idioms

The Sentence Structure Test consists of thirty-five questions to be completed in thirty minutes. These questions are divided into two parts:

In Part I, students are given a sentence with a portion of the sentence underlined. They are asked to select from a list of four possible choices the version of the underlined sentence which is best. In order to do well on this part of the test, the students must recognize and understand the following:

Complete Sentences
  Sentence Fragments
  Two sentences run together
Coordinating and subordinating conjunctions
Misplaced modifiers

In Part II, students are to rewrite a sentence without changing the main idea by beginning with a specific group of words and then selecting an appropriate ending by choosing what the next words will be from a list of four possible endings. There are twelve items in this test. In order to do well on this part of the test, the student must understand and recognize the following:

Sentence fragments
Parallellism
Logical relationships (transitions)
Wordiness
Faulty pronoun-antecedent relationships
Misplaced modifiers
Comma splices
Dangling modifiers

The Logical Relationships Test allows students thirty minutes to complete fifty items designed to test the student's ability to perceive logical relationships. This ability is tested by four methods:

Categorizing--The student is given two specific examples of a category and then asked to select from a list of four choices the category to which the specific examples belong. Then the student is given a category and asked to select a specific example of that category from a list.

Using appropriate connectives (transitional expressions)--In this section the student is to choose the word or phrase from a list of four that best completes the meaning of the sentence. There are thirteen items in this section of the test.

Making analogies--The student is asked to complete analogies by selecting the word that will logically complete the comparison from a list of four possible words.

Recognizing relationships between ideas--The students are given two or three sentences and then asked questions about the relationships between the sentences. The student is given four possible answers.

The Vocabulary Test reqires the student to select synonyms for thirty words in fifteen minutes. The student has to choose from four choices.

The Reading Comprehension Test requires the student to read sixteen short paragraphs and answer forty-five questions designed to test the student's ability to comprehend, to recall, and to infer. The student is given thirty minutes to complete this part of the test.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The students record their scores on a self-scoring two-page answer sheet designed to give the instructor and the students immediate results of the students' performances. After completing the test, the students separate the two-page answer sheet where the correct marks have been made within various geometric figures representing the different skills that appear on each test. The students count the correct marks of each geometric figure and record the number of correct answers in a space along side the total number of items for that skill. (See Appendix M) The instructor and the student can then look at the total number of correct answers as well as the total number of items testing a particular skill and determine how well that student knows that skill. For example, if a student scores 5 on a principle tested by 13 items, the instructor and the student may interpret this score as an indication of a need for further study of this principle.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Scores for each skill tested are presented as well as total scores for each of the tests.

PREDICTABILITY

This test is still in the process of being normed.

English Composition Test: Princeton New Jersey: College-Level Examination Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, 1962.

The English Composition Test is designed to measure both knowledge of the theoretical aspects of writing usually taught in a traditional two-semester course in composition and the ability to put principles of standard written English into practice.

CONTENT

The English Composition Test is a sixty minute, ninety item test separated into four "Parts". The "Parts" are not indicated by designations, but separated by different sets of instructions. The instructions for the first and fourth parts ask the student to recognize writing that does not follow the conventions of standard written English. The student is asked to choose the one underlined word or phrase designated by A, B, C, D, E. A choice of E indicates "No Error".

Some of the basic conventions of standard written English tested are as follows:

- Verbs
  - Shift in tense
  - Subject-verb agreement
- Pronouns
  - Antecedent Agreement
  - Pronoun case
- Adjectives
  - Superlative
  - Comparative
  - Completion
- Adverbs
- Diction
- Idioms
- Wordiness
- Parallelism

Parts II and III require the students not only to identify unacceptable usage, but also to indicate that they can organize ideas to achieve clarity and effectiveness of expression. In Part II students are asked to choose the best way of phrasing a sentence. In some sentences, the underlined part does not meet the requirements of standard written English and needs to be rephrased; in others the underlined part is the most effective version. If the sentence needs rephrasing, the students select the best version from the ones that are offered. In order to complete Part III correctly, the students are asked to change given sentences according to specific directions. After mentally recasting the sentence, students choose from a list of five rewordings the one with the word, phrase, or structure that appears in their own mentally revised sentence.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Raw scores on the General Examinations: English Composition Test are converted to a two-digit scale with a range from 200 to 800 based upon a 1976 norming group.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

As this test is currently organized, it is not a diagnostic instrument. It was designed to aid in awarding college credit by examination. The material covered corresponds to what is normally taught in an eclectric introductory English course emphasizing training in reading and composition. However, if scores could be reported for each "Part", the instructor would have some indication of the student's knowledge of the skills tested and the student's ability to write sentences.

PREDICTABILITY

The publishers report a reliability coefficient of .91 with a standard error of measurement of 27. These figures are based on scale scores of 200-800 with a mean 478 with a standard deviation of 90.

Science Research Associates, Inc. Junior College Placement Program, Form A. Chicago, Illinois: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1968.

The Science Research Associates Junior College Placement Program is designed to test students who have varying levels of preparation in Mathematics, English Usage, and Reading. Each test consists of three levels: Red, the lowest, Blue, the highest; and green, the intermediate. To determine at which level each student should begin, the student is directed to take a short, self-scoring "minitest" called the Entry Index.

CONTENT

In English and reading the student is directed to take the English Usage and Reading Index.

There are three different types of questions in the English Usage and Reading Entry Index. In the first type, the student is given a grammatically correct sentence and an unfinished revision of that sentence. The student is to complete the unfinished sentence mentally according to a new sentence plan, using a given word or phrase. The revised sentence need not be an improvement on the original, but it must be both a logically and grammatically correct restatement of the same idea and an example of an acceptable English usage. Following the unfinished revision of the sentence are five single words or groups of words labled A through E. The student is to choose the one word or group of words that would be included in the new sentence.

In the second type of question, the student is given a complete sentence. Following that sencence are five sentences. The student has to decide which of these five sentences has the same meaning.

In the third type, the student is given a sentence that is divided into four parts labeled A through D. There may be one or more errors in grammar, punctuation, or usage in one of these parts of the sentence. The student is to decide which lettered part of the sentence contains the errors.

Three of each of these types of questions make up the three sections of the English Usage and Reading Entry Index. At the end of each section the student is directed to continue or to begin the test at the red, green, or blue level. Whether the student continues or not depends upon the student's performance.

Each level of the English Usage test is designed to measure the student's ability to use correct grammar and punctuation and to rewrite sentences involving such transformations as, the shift from an adverbial to a noun clause, from subordination to coordination, from a noun to a noun clause, and from direct to indirect discourse.

Some of the principles of standard English tested are:

- Punctuation
  - Quotation marks
  - Semi-colon
  - Commas
    - Unnecessary
    - Comma splice
    - Restrictive and non-restrictive clauses
- Periods
  - Verb
    - Tense
    - Subject-verb agreement
  - Advert/adjective
  - Double negatives
  - Pronoun (case) (number)
  - Nouns (gerunds)
  - Sentence sense (run-on)

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Science Research Associates reports scores on five different placement rosters on which the names and all scores of the students appear in the following order: (1) alphabetical, (2) ranked by score on the Educational Ability test, (3) ranked by score on the English Usage test, (4) ranked by score on the reading test, and (5) ranked by score on the mathematics test.

On each of these placement rosters, the scores are reported in standard scores and percentile rank for each of the sections tested.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

As the test is organized it is not a diagnostic instrument. The teacher receives one score for English Usage which covers several principles.

PREDICTABILITY

Norms for the Junior College Placement Program were obtained by equating the placement tests to appropriate tests of the Iowa Tests of Educational Development. The percentiles reported are for second-semester seniors.

No statistics on reliability were provided.

Raygor, Alton L. McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System: Writing Test. Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California: McGraw-Hill, 1970.

The McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System Writing Test is one of six basic academic skills tests designed as a part of an individualized system of integrated tests and instructional materials. This system purports to diagnose, prescribe, instruct, and evaluate. The test, of course, provides the diagnosis.

CONTENT

The Writing Test has three parts: Language Mechanics, Sentence Patterns, and Paragraph Patterns.

Language Mechanics consists of thirty items designed to measure the student's ability to recognize errors in capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. This section contains two short compositions. Each composition has fifteen underlined words or phrases. The student has to determine whether the underlined material is correct or contains an error in punctuation, capitalization, or grammar. Four of these items contain no errors.

Some of the principles tested are:

- Capitalization
  - Titles
  - Place names
- Punctuation
  - Periods
    - Omissions, creating run-on sentences
    - Unnecessary, creating short choppy sentences or fragment
  - Commas
    - Restrictive and non-restrictive clauses
    - Comma splices
    - Items in a series
  - Apostrophe (ownership)
  - Exclamation point
- Grammar
  - Verbs
    - Shift in tense
    - Subject-verb agreement
    - Principal parts
  - Adjectives
    - Superlative
    - Comparative
  - Adverbs/adjectives
- Diction

Sentence Patterns consists of twenty-six items designed to measure the ability of the student to recognize sentence types, grammatically correct sentences, parallel construction, and the use of appropriate transitions to connect sentences to form an effective paragraph.

Sentence types: The first ten items require the student to identify each of ten sentences as either (a) sentence fragment, (b) simple sentence, (c) compound sentence, or (d) complex sentence.

Grammatically correct sentences: The student is asked to choose the correct sentence from five sets of four sentences. Each of these sentences is constructed with the use of the relative pronouns who, what, which, or whom. Thus this section seems to test the student's ability to recognize the correct use of these pronouns.

Parallel Construction: The student has five sets of four sentences from which the student is to choose the correct answer.

Transitional Expressions: Two brief paragraphs of three sentences each to which the student is asked to supply three transitional words linking each of these three sentences comprise this section. The student has to choose a transitional expression from three groups of four words each.

Paragraph Patterns: This section measures the ability of the student to construct effective paragraphs by requiring the student to select appropriate topic sentences, developing sentences, and concluding sentences. The student is also required to decide the proper sequence of sentences in a paragraph and to divide a series of sentences into a logical paragraph.

Topic Sentences: The student is asked to select a topic sentence from a group of four sentences for each of three paragraphs consisting of two to three sentences each.

Developing Sentences: The student is asked to choose from four groups of sentences, sentences that will develop each of three topic sentences.

Concluding sentences: The student has to select one sentence from a group of four sentences to provide a conclusion for each of four paragraphs consisting of two sentences each.

Sequence of Sentences: The student is asked to arrange four sentences to develop a logical paragraph.

Paragraph Division: There are two paragraphs, one with four sentences and the other with eight sentences. The student is asked to indicate where new paragraphs should begin.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The results are reported in two ways. First, results on tests machine scored at CTB/McGraw-Hill are reported on a Class Record Sheet which is an alphabetized list of all students in a class with their test scores. This record provides for reporting both standard score and percentile rank for each test taken. The standard scores are based on the total norming group, while the percentile ranks are based on one of three reference groups: four-year college freshmen and sophomores, two-year college students, and college-bound high school juniors and seniors. The testing institution may specify which group.

Second, the scores may be reported on The Student Instruction Sheet. This sheet provides spaces in which to record derived scores for each skill measured by the tests, and percentiles of total scores, for student's test scores before instruction and again after a period of instruction to show at a glance the student's growth.

There are also spaces for total scores and part scores for all skills and subskills which are measured by the tests. The part scores indicate which subskills are strong and which are weak. However, these part scores actually cover subskills which in themselves cover other skills. For example, Language Mechanics is considered a subskill, yet it covers capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. No individual score is given for these specific skills, only one score for "Language Mechanics".

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

According to the publishers, the Writing Test in this system is diagnostic in a "general way". It does not point out specific problems. For example, the instructor learns from the results of the test that the student is either weak or strong in Language Mechanics; yet this section covers punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. The instructor does not know from the reported scores which of these specific areas is weak or strong.

PREDICTABILITY

According to the publishers, no effort has been made to correlate scores on this test with a criterion score of any kind. The items selected for inclusion in the Writing Test are defined as the content of three tests developed as a part of the McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System: Writing Skills I, Writing Skills II, and Paragraph Patterns.

Callis, Robert and Willoughby Johnson. Missouri College English Test, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. 1965.

According to the publishers, the Missouri College English Test measures basic writing skills and concepts that are pertinent to college freshman composition courses.

CONTENT

The Missouri College English Test consists of ninety items to be completed in forty minutes. The test is divided into three parts: 1) Language Mechanics, 2) Sentence Style and Structure, and 3) Paragraph Organization.

Part I, Language Mechanics, requires the student to indicate whether each of sixty underlined parts of sentences found in five different essays contains an error in capitalization, grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

Some of the principles tested are:

- Punctuation
  - Comma
    - Comma splice
    - Restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases and clauses
    - Unnecessary
    - Introductory clauses or phrases
  - Periods (between independent clauses)
  - Colon/semi-colon
  - Apostrophe (to show possession)
- Capitalization
  - Proper nouns
  - Beginning sentences
- Grammar
  - Verbs
    - Agreement
    - Tense
    - Principal parts
  - Pronouns
    - Case
    - Pronoun-antecedent agreement
    - Relative pronouns
- Spelling
  - Recognition of correctly spelled words according to context (homonyms)

Part II, Sentence Style and Structure, requires the student to choose from a group of sentences the one sentence which expresses the idea best. In order to perform this task well, the student must be able to recognize wordiness and awkwardness.

Part III, Paragraph Organization, requires the student to arrange four sets, of five sentences each, into a logical paragraph by indicating which sentence is to be first, second, third, fourth, and fifth.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this test are published in percentiles and stanines based upon norms from eighty-one private and public two and four-year colleges.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

Since the publisher provides a classification of items according to content specifications, it is possible to key responses so information could be obtained as to how the student responded for each area tested. However, the number of items for each category of error is small. There is also a great deal of emphasis given to the mechanics rather than to the composing aspects of writing.

PREDICTABILITY

The publishers report a reliability coefficient of .94 with a standard error of measurement of 3.7 according to the Spearman-Brown formula.

Remmers, H.H., R.D. Franklin, G.S. Wykoff, and J. H. McKee, The Purdue High School English Test. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963.

The Purdue High School English Test is a shortened version (thirty-six minutes) of the New Purdue Placement Test in English (sixty-five minutes).

According to the manual for the Purdue High School Test, "the primary purpose of the Purdue High School English Test is to sample the knowledge of 'Good English' possessed by high school students and college freshmen."

CONTENT

This test consists of five parts: 1) Grammar, 2) Punctuation, 3) Effective Expression, 4) Vocabulary, and 5) Spelling.

Part I, Grammar, consists of twenty items to be completed in six minutes. The student is asked to indicate which sentences do not contain grammatical errors and which sentences do contain grammatical errors by indicating "r" for right and "w" for incorrect.

The following principles are tested:

- Pronouns (case)
- Verbs
  - Principal parts
  - Subject-verb agreement

Part II, Punctuation, consists of thirty items to be completed in eight minutes. The student is to indicate which sentences are punctuated correctly by marking "r" and "w".

The following marks of punctuation are tested:

- Punctuation
  - Commas
    - Before "for"
    - Unnecessary
    - Comma splices
  - Quotation marks
  - Colon
  - Semi-colon
  - Dash
  - Apostrophe (possession)

Part III, Effective Expression consists of twenty sentences to be completed in six minutes. The student is required to indicate which of the sentences are clear and effective.

Some of the principles of grammar the student must recognize are; not expressed or unclear pronoun antecedents, run-on sentences, misplaced adjective clauses, shifts in person, and sentence fragments.

Part IV, Vocabulary, is an eight minute, thirty item test which requires the student to select the word which means most nearly the same as the indicated word. For each of the thirty words, the student must choose a synonym from a list of five words.

Part V, Spelling, consists of thirty groups of four words each. The student is to indicate the misspelled word, if any, in each group.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The results are published in the form of percentile ranks and stanines for each of the five parts of the test; thus, a teacher or a student would know the relative scores of the student for each of the areas tested.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

Since scores can be reported for each of the areas tested, the instructor would be able to determine to some extent the relative weaknesses and strengths of the student in the areas tested; however, the areas tested are limited to the mechanical aspects of writing.

PREDICTABILITY

Using the Kuder-Richardson formula, the publishers computed a reliability coefficient of the total test of .91 with a standard error of measurement of 5.5.

Callis, Robert, Jack C. Merwin, and Richard Madden. Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK) College IIA. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Incorporated, 1974.

The Stanford Test of Academic Skills was designed to measure basic skills in reading, mathematics, and English of hereterogeneous groups of students. The time alloted for each of the tests is forty minutes. The analysis of this test will be restricted to the English Test.

CONTENT

The English Test is divided into five sections: 1) Learning Skills, 2) Usage Conventions, 3) Spelling, 4) Sentence Sensitivity, and 5) Paragraph Arrangement.

Part A, Learning Skills, is designed to measure dictionary skills, reference sources, diction, and the nature and structure of the language. The student shows the ability to use a dictionary by answering questions that demonstrate an ability to distinguish the symbols for the vowel sounds, to locate stress or accent in a word, to correctly alphabetize a word, and to use prefixes and suffixes in word formation. The student also demonstrates a knowledge of the best reference sources for a given type of information. The student further demonstrates an understanding of the nature and structure of language by answering questions that reflect the recognition of the proper time and place for using formal, standard, colloquial, and slang expressions, and correctly identifying structural parts of language and their functions.

Part B, Usage Conventions, is designed to test a student's knowledge of commonly used conventions of grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. The student is required to recognize errors in the context of a short narrative. There are twenty items in this section.

Some of the grammatical conventions tested are:

Confusing words (a, an) (two, too, to)
Verbs
  Subject-verb agreement
  Tense
Pronoun (faulty pronoun reference)
Capitalization
Punctuation (Comma)

Part C, Spelling, is a twenty-five item test. The student is required to distinguish between correctly and incorrectly spelled words. The spelling principles tested appear to be based upon phonics, word-building rules and doubling consonants before and after vowel sound, ea, ee, and el spellings.

Part D, Sentence Sensitivity, is designed to test the student's knowledge of effective sentence structure. The student is required to choose from among four compound or complex sentences the one that expresses the idea best or most clearly. In order to select the best sentence, the student must be able to recognize wordiness, misplaced modifiers, and awkward construction.

Part E, Paragraph Arrangement, is designed to test the student's ability to organize sentences in a paragraph. The student is given three sets of four sentences which he has to arrange to develop a well organized paragraph.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Scores are reported in scaled scores, percentile rannks, and stanines.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

This test is accompanied by a manual which contains a table of the basic skills covered. Also indicated is the number of each item which tests for each basic skill. If scores were reported for each group of items testing a specific skill, the teacher and student would be able to discern the student's weaknesses or strengths in that parcitular skill.

PREDICTABILITY

Two types of reliability coefficients are established: Spearman-Brown formula produced a reliability coefficient of .95 with a standard error of measurement of 3.2; Kuder-Richardson formula 20 computed a reliability coefficient of .93 with a standard error of measurement of 3.2.

Admissions Testing Program of the College Entrance Examination Board. Test of Standard Written English. Princeton: New Jersey, 1975.

The Test of Standard Written English is designed to help institutions place their entering students in regular freshmen English composition courses and alternate courses designed to improve the student's understanding of the material explored by the test.

This test presents a total of fifty multiple-choice questions divided into three parts. The parts are not designated as "parts" or "sections" but are separated by different sets of instructions.

CONTENT

The first and third sets of instructions ask the student only to recognize writing that does not follow the conventions of standard written English. The student is asked to choose the one underlined word or phrase designated by A, B, C, D, E that must be changed in order to make the sentence acceptable in standard written English. A choice of "E" indicates "No Error". Some of the basic conventions of standard written English tested are:

- Verbs
  - Shift in tense
  - Subject-verb agreement
- Pronouns
  - Antecedent agreement
  - Pronoun case
- Adjectives
  - Superlative
  - Comparative
  - Completion
- Adverbs
- Diction
- Idioms
- Double Negatives
- Correlatives
- Parallel Structure
- Diction

The second set of instructions requires the student not only to identify unacceptable usage, but also requires the student to choose the best way of rephrasing the sentence. For these items, a part of a sentence or an entire sentence is underlined. Beneath the sentence are five ways of writing the underlined part. Choice A is the same as the underlined part. The student is asked to choose the most effective sentence. The following principles are tested:

- Parallelism
- Wordiness
- Misplaced clauses
- Sentence fragments
- Dangling modifiers

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Raw scores on the Test of Standard Written English are converted to a two-digit scale with a range from 20 to 80 and percentile ranks of scores based on the performance of particular students taking this test in relation to scores of college bound students who took the Stanford Achievement Test in 1973-74.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

As the test is currently constructed, it can not be used as a diagnostic instrument. However, if scores could be reported for each "part", the instructor and student would have some indication of the student's knowledge of the skills tested and the student's ability to write sentences.

PREDICTABILITY

The reliability coefficient computed for this test is .87 with a standard error of measurement of 4.

COLLEGE DESIGNED TESTS

Skyline College. English Composition Writing Sample. San Bruno, California: Skyline College, 1977.

The English Composition Writing Sample is a diagnostic writing sample used to help place students in an English class appropriate to their needs as writers.

The student is given forty minutes to write an essay of approximately 300 words. The student may choose from one of four topics designed to evoke either a narrative, a definition, an exposition, or an argumentation. (See Appendix N for examples.)

The sample essays are graded by two graders from within the English department on a rotating basis. One is a full time faculty member and the other is either a full time faculty member or a part time day-evening teacher who has had experience teaching at least three of the four English levels taught at Skyline College.

The graders first read a sampling of fifteen or so papers without assigning a placement. They then discuss the fifteen samples and agree on the terms of the four areas established by departmental agreement:

I. Content: adherence to topic; complexity of ideas; logic substance; support for generalizations; use of specifics and examples; conclusions.
II. Organization: clarity, coherence and interrelatedness of paragraphs and sentences.
III. Mechanics: spelling; diction; grammar; sentence structure.
IV. Length: development and completeness of ideas.

Next, the readers read the rest of the essays and separate them out by class level. Those that are clear are placed in a pile for that level. Those that are unclear or seem to fall between two levels are placed in a pile to be read by the other reader who then reads them and assigns a placement.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The sample essay is graded by using a four point scale which corresponds to the four courses to which a student may be assigned: 4 for English 1A; 3 for English 1Ax; 2 for English 10; and 1 for English 80.

An essay is assigned a particular level based on the following criteria: *

For English 1A or level 4

I. Content: Strong in all areas; may be allowed some lack of specifics since that has been traditionally an area that 1A must teach; takes the ideas beyond obvious or automatic responses.

II. Organization: Clear sense of transitions and of general movement from point to point.

III. Mechanics: Some minor errors allowable but overall should have strong sense of mechanics.

IV. Length: Whatever the length of the paper, it should project a sense of having dealt with the ideas in a way that says as much as can be said, given the limiting of the topic which the student adopts.

For English 1Ax or Level 3

I. Content: Generally well handled but deficient in one or two areas of a (1A) answer; for example, may occasionally drift off on tangents or fail to support some points adequately.

II. Organization: Generally sound but at times may jump from idea to idea or set a series of sentences together which do not follow in the correct order or seem to belong to separate paragraphs.

III. Mechanics: A few serious flaws in sentence structure or grammar.

IV. Length: Incomplete development or failure to reach adequate conclusions. (Serious problems in any two of the above areas should direct 1Ax placement.)

* Taken from May 3, 1977, Memorandum from Marvin Shaw to English/Foreign Language Division

For English 10 or Level 2

I. Content: Does not deal with the topic but presents only a very simplified set of ideas; has faults in logic of the argument; uses few specifics; reaches no conclusions (these are a set of "ors"; obviously if a paper has all these faults it should be considered for 80).

II. Organization: Brief, unclear ideas; little or no sense of paragraphs or relatedness from sentence to sentence.

III. Mechanics: Many errors in two of the areas. (spelling; diction; grammar; sentence structure).

IV. Length: Brief, obvious answers with little sense of how to use examples or develop an idea.

For English 80 or Level 1

I. Content: Non-responsive to subject; illogical; unsupported; unspecific.

II. Organization: Sentences unrelated; paragraphs incomplete or non-existent.

III. Mechanics; Serious problems in three of the areas (spelling; diction; grammar; sentence structure).

IV. Length: No sense of how to convey an idea or how to focus on a subject for any length of time. All the very brief or completely non-responsive papers.

PREDICTABILITY

Instructors are urged to give a placement diagnostic of some sort the first week of the semester to serve as a check on how well the written placement has indicated a student's placement.

Hake, Rosemary. Essay Examination. Chicago State University

Rosemary Hake's Essay Examination is a sample essay used either as a placement/diagnostic examination or an exit/qualifying examination. Whether the essay is used as a placement/diagnostic or an exit/qualifying examination depends upon the topics. The topics are formulated as questions based upon published topics. Questions formulated with "What?" or "How?" are placement examination essays; questions formulated in the subjunctive are proficiency examination essays. (See Appendix O)

The essay is evaluated by a four dimensional framework designed to help the evaluator categorize the flaws he observes. This framework provides a measure of a student's knowledge of (1) structure of the essay as a whole, (2) logic and coherence between paragraphs, and sentences, (3) mechanics and usage and (4) punctuation.

The four dimensions are as follows: (For specific details see Appendix)

Exposition Structural Organization
Essay, Paragraph and Statement Continuity
Mechanics and Usage
Punctuation

PROCEDURE

The student writes an essay on a specially designed essay sheet bordered by a computer-like score sheet with mark-sense spaces in columns for each of the dimensions.

The grader is expected to read the essay twice: once for the flaws (errors) in the first dimension and again for flaws in the other three dimensions. For dimension one, (structure of the essay as a whole), the grader is required to indicate the specific flaw by marking the appropriate number of flaws. For dimensions two, three, and four, a mark is to be made on the line where the error occurs. The grader, then makes a summary recommendation--for placement if the examination is a diagnostic/placement examination; for pass or fail, if it is an exit; for quality if it is a research examination.

PREDICTABILITY

In order to insure maximum uniformity, the Hake method involves "calibrating" graders. A certain number of flaws is added to the flaws recorded by a grader who stands low on a group scale of severity/leniency and a certain number subtracted from grader who stands high on that scale.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The scores for Hake's examination are reported in two parts-- a score for dimension one and a total score for dimensions two, three, and four. Dimension one reflects the structural whole of the essay. Therefore, the number of errors possible in dimension one can only occur once. The number of errors possible in dimensions two, three, and four-- essay, paragraph and statement continuity; mechanics and usage; and punctuation, respectively-- on the other hand, can occur an infinite number of times. For example a score of 4-32 means that there are four flaws in dimension one and thirty-two errors in dimensions two, three, and four.

To determine the standard for passing and failing, flaw counts of papers recommended for pass are charted against those of papers recommended for fail. The pass/fail or minimum competency boundary for dimension one is determined by the point at which the two lines intersect. Likewise, the point at which the two lines intersect for dimensions two, three, and four intersect indicate the pass/fail boundary. (See Appendix)

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

Rosemary Hake's method of grading an essay can provide a general diagnosis of a student's weaknesses, for it provides a score of errors for each of the four dimensions. However, the instructor is not able to determine from the scores by themselves what the specific weaknesses are. The instructor knows, for example, from a score of 4-32 that the student has some problems with the other three dimensions. To determine, specifically, what the problems are the instructor has to look to the essay itself. To be truly diagnostic, a means would have to be devised to indicate the precise nature of the flaws measured and a count of the number of times these flaws occur.

Individual Study Plan. Chabot College, South County Junior College, 1975.

The Individual Study Plan, designed by Chabot College faculty members, diagnoses specific weaknesses in sentence recognition (fragments and run-together sentences), subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, verb tense agreement, and comma usage. These areas correspond to an individualized sequence of concepts and writing assignments presented in their Writing Center.

CONTENT

The Individual Study Plan consists of three parts with a total of eighty-eight items.

Part I, designed to test the student's ability to recognize sentence fragments and "run-together" sentences, consists of twenty-four items. Fourteen of these items are presented in a short paragraph. The remaining ten items are presented in unrelated sentences.

Part II, consisting of thirty-nine items, is designed to test proper usage of subject-verb agreement, case-agreement, and verb tense.

Part III, punctuation, is limited to testing for the use of the comma.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Individual raw scores are provided for each section.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

Each part of the test was designed to test for specific principles. The scores of the student for each principle do give the student and the instructor some idea of how well the student has learned the tested principles.

Mercyhurst College Diagnostic Pre-Test. Erie, Pennsylvania: Mercyhurst College, 1976.

The Mercyhurst College Diagnostic Pre-Test consists of seven sections: Spelling, Dictionary, Verbs, Pronouns, Sentence Structure, and Punctuation.

CONTENT

Part I, Spelling, requires the student to complete the spelling of words in the context of a sentence. The word is presented with letters omitted. For example, (ign-r-nt) for ignorant. Many of these words are words students often confuse in usuage and the correct spelling must be decided from the context. For example, (-ffect) for affect or effect. There are fifty items in this section.

Part II, Dictionary, consists of a dictionary entry of a word. The student is required to answer questions about the part of speech, the etymology, the pronunciation, and syllabification of this word based upon this entry.

Part III, Verbs, consists of two parts. The first is designed to test the student's ability to make subjects and verbs agree; the second is designed to test the student's ability to determine the proper tense.

Part IV, Pronouns, is designed to determine the student's knowledge of pronoun case. The student must choose from a choice of two pronouns the correct pronoun form.

Part V, Sentence Structure, is designed to determine the student's ability to write effective sentences. There are two exercises. The first requires the student to rewrite sixteen faulty sentences. These sentences contain faulty parallelism, comma splices, dangling modifiers, choppy sentences, and sentence fragments. The second exercise requires the student to combine four sets of two short, choppy sentences into one sentence. All of the choices are provided in multiple choice sentences. The student simply indicates the sentence that is the most effective.

Part VI, Using Words Correctly, is designed to determine if the student is able to distinguish between many of the words that often confuse students. For example, their-there; to-too-two; and it's-its.

Part VII, Punctuation, consists of ten sentences without any marks of punctuation. The student is required to indicate the correct marks of punctuation.

The following marks are needed to correctly punctuate these sentences:

Quotation marks
Apostrophes
Commas
Dashes
Colons
Semi-colons

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

Any attempt to determine the strength and weaknesses of a student is limited to the areas tested.

PUBLICATION AND PREDICTABILITY

No information is provided.

Canada College, The Writing Sample. Redwood City, California: Canada College, 1975.

Canada College began its current method of placing students in English classes in the Spring of 1975, after a period of several years without a placement examination. The return to a placement examination resulted from overwhelming evidence that high school grades were inadequate predictors of writing and reading skills. Consequently, the Canada English Department adopted a placement method consisting of two parts: a reading test (currently the Nelson-Denny Reading Test) and a writing sample.

Since this report is primarily concerned with examinations that test writing skills, only the Writing Sample will be discussed.

The Writing Sample provides a diagnosis of basic and advanced writing skills and directs additional placement in courses designed for remediation of specific writing problems. The Writing Sample calls for students, in a forty-five minute period, to write an essay of moderate length on a subject selected from four topics, giving students an opportunity to compose either a narrative, a definitive, an expository, or an argumentative theme. (See Appendix p).

In order to assure uniformity, all essays are read by a single instructor.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The Writing Sample dictates placement in the following manner. An essay demonstrating a good sense of organization (i. e., a definte starting point, proceeding in a logical sequence to a specific end), development (i. e., adequate details, illustrations, reasons to establish the validity of an idea), paragraphing (i. e., recognition of relationships between ideas and differences between generalities and specifics), with few mechanical errors (i. e., errors in punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure), receives a placement of English 1A. An essay demonstrating weakness in one or two of the above areas receives a placement of English 1A, plus English 68B, Writing Lab. An essay with serious problems in two or more of the above areas elicits a placement of English 50A and, in most cases, English 68A, Developmental Writing Lab. In addition, an essay which reveals a particular problem in grammar, vocabulary, or spelling necessitates a placement in English 55, 56, or 58, respectively. In those instances where the writing sample reveals a severe lack of skills in most of all areas, the student is placed only in labs, postponing entrance into English 50A or English 1A until minimal skills have been developed.

TEXTBOOK AND PROGRAMMED SEQUENCE TESTS

Graham, Sheila Y. Diagnostic Tests to Accompany the Harbrace College Handbook and the Harbrace College Workbook. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1977.

Ten diagnostic tests have been designed to examine the six areas of composition that make up the Harbrace College Handbook and the Harbrace College Workbook. They are as follows:

Grammar
1) Sentence structure
2) Grammar
Mechanics
3) Mechanics
Punctuation
4) Punctuation
Spelling and Diction
5) Spelling
6) Diction
Effective Sentences
7) Coordination, subordination, logical constructions
8) Coherence, parallel structure, needless shifts, pronoun reference
Larger Elements
9) Paragraphs
10) Organization

Designed so that most students should be able to complete a test in less than thirty minutes, the contentof each test is carefully created to enable students to demonstrate their mastery of rules covered by the textbook and workbook.

CONTENT

The Grammar section of the textbook and workbook is covered by two tests: Sentence Structure and Grammar. In the Sentence Structure Test, the student is required to indicate whether each of ten sentences is a fragment; a fused sentence (two sentences run together with no punctuation); a comma splice (two sentences joined only by a comma); or a correct sentence.

The Grammar Test requires the student to recognize errors in the following:

Verbs
Subject-verb agreement
Principal parts
Pronouns (Relative who and whom) Agreement
Adjective/Adverb

For the Mechanics Test, the students are required to indicate where they should use italics and quotation marks.

The Punctuation Test requires the student to insert all needed marks of punctuation in each of twenty sentences. Marks of

punctuation tested are:

Commas
- Restrictive and non-restrictive clauses
- Introductory phrases and clauses
- Coordinated adjectives
- Setting off quotations
- Items in a series
- Parenthetical expressions (appositives)

Quotation Marks in direct quotes
Apostrophes (possessions)

The Spelling Test provides the student with a list of twenty-five words from which letters are omitted. The student is to supply the missing letters.

The Diction Test provides the student with twenty sentences in which the student is to underline each word or phrase that is inexact, unidiomatic, or wordy. The student is to write in the space provided the numbers 1, 2, 3, or 4 to indicate whether the underlined word is inexact, unindiomatic, wordy, or omitted, respectively.

There are two Effective Sentence tests. Each of these tests provides the student with ten sets of three statements. The student is to choose the most effective of the three statements. To choose the most effective sentence in the first effective sentence test, the student must know how to coordinate, subordinate, and use logical constructions. To choose the most effective sentence in the second effective sentence test, the student must be able to recognize coherence, parallel structure, needless shifts, and pronoun reference.

The Paragraph Test provides the student with two paragraphs. The student is then asked the following questions about each paragraph:

- Which sentence presents the controlling idea?
- Which sentences shift the focus away from the controlling idea?
- What is the most noticeable device used for coherence?
- What is the method used to arrange the sentences in a logical order?
- What is the main method of development used?

The Organization Test requires the student to answer questions about five sentences from various paragraphs of an essay. These questions examine the student's abilities to recognize thesis statements, topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, and irrelevant sentences.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

These ten tests were designed to correspond to the six areas of composition that make up the Harbrace College Handbook and the Harbrace College Workbook; therefore, each test measures specific principles set forth in each of these areas. For this reason, the tests cover more than one principle and provide only a general idea of students' difficulties in these areas. The instructor would have to exercise caution in using students' scores on the Paragraph and Organization Tests, for too few items are included to give a very accurate picture of students' knowledge.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The instructor determines how the scores should be reported. The publishers suggest that scores be interpreted by the instructor in relation to criteria set up for the class. The instructor is warned to be wary of the "65% is passing" syndrome because the skills covered by the tests are not parallel in difficulty.

PREDICTABILITY

No reliability studies are reported.

Hook, J. N. and William H. Evans. Individualized English Set H. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1974.

The Individualized English Set H is a self-study instructional program consisting of individual exercises designed to help the student master eighty-eight principles of English. The forty minute diagnostic test which accompanies this program is designed to help students individually locate their problems in grammar and usage, sentence structure and style, punctuation, and mechanics of language--the four parts of the test.

Each of eighty-eight principles is tested by three questions. The student is asked to indicate whether or not a sentence is correct or incorrect by marking inside a space labled C for correct and W for incorrect.

CONTENT

Part A Grammar and Usage

1. Subjects and objects (choosing the proper pronouns)
2. Who vs. Whom
3. Predicate nominatives
4. Words in apposition
5. Possessives with gerunds
6. Pronoun reference
7. Pronoun Agreement (Number)
8. Pronoun Shift
9. Adjectives and Adverbs in Comparisons
10. Adjectives and Adverbs with verbs of the senses
11. Adjectives and Adverbs (Good and Well)
12. The Intensifier
13. Verb Agreement
14. Verb Agreement (Inverted Constructions)
15. Verb Agreement (Indefinite pronouns)
16. Verb Agreement when interrupters come between the subject and the verb
17. Verb Agreement with a compound subject
18. Verb Agreement with collective nouns
19. Principal Parts of Verbs
20. Verbs - principal parts of lie and lay
21. Shall and Will
22. Verbs (shifts)
23. The subjunctive
24. Accurate use of nor, while, since and as

Part B Sentence Structure and Style

25. Sentence fragments (dependent clauses)
26. Sentence fragments (phrases)
27. Misplaced clause and phrase modifiers
28. Position of words like "only" for logical and formal use
29. Squinting modifiers
30. Dangling modifiers
31. Split infinitive
32. Arrangement by chronology
33. Excessive short sentences
34. Excessive coordination
35. Coordination of unrelated ideas
36. Failure to subordinate properly
37. Strings of subordinate clauses
38. Parallel structure in comparisons and in series
39. Parallel structure with linking verbs and correlative conjunctions
40. Comparisons using as . . . as and similar expressions
41. Comparisons with omitted words
42. Faulty omission (necessary connectives)
43. Faulty omission (necessary parts of verbs
44. Wordiness and repetition
45. Too many clauses
46. Unnecessary passive voice
47. Weak sentence beginnings
48. Weak sentence endings
49. Climax in a series
50. Trite expressions
51. Farfetched figures
52. Figures of speech (missed)
53. Lack of euphony
54. Jargon
55. Lack of sentence variety

Part C Punctuation

56. Terminal punctuation: periods, question marks, and exclamation marks
57. Commas to prevent misreading
58. Commas to separate paired adjectives or adverbs
59. Commas in compound sentences
60. Commas with various interpolated elements
61. Commas to set off nonessential phrases and clauses
62. Commas in a series
63. Commas (unnecessary)
64. The semicolon as a divider in a compound or compound-complex sentence
65. The semicolon with heavy internal punctuation
66. The colon before a formal quotation or a formal list
67. The colon in miscellaneous uses
68. The apostrophe to show the possessive of a noun
69. The apostrophe to show the possessive of a noun
70. The apostrophe in unusual plurals
71. The hyphen in word division
72. Miscellaneous uses of the hyphen
73. The dash
74. Parenthesis to show a remote relationship
75. Brackets for comments within quotations
76. Direct and indirect quotation marks
77. Quotation marks within quotation marks
78. Quotation marks in paragraphs of conversation
79. Quotation marks with titles
80. Quotation marks with other marks of punctuation

Part D Mechanics of Language

81. Underlining
82. Abbreviations
83. Capitalization in sentences, quotations, and letters
84. Capitalization in proper names
85. Capitalization of school subjects, relatives, titles
86. Miscellaneous capitalization usage
87. When to spell numbers
88. Miscellaneous conventional usage of numbers

PUBLICATION OF SCORES

Because each of the eighty-eight principles is tested by three questions, each principle is scored individually. If the students get all three parts correct, they indicate that they not only know the principle tested but the degree of certainty of their knowledge. If they miss any parts, they demonstrate their need for additional work in that area.

PREDICTABILITY

The three questions for each item provide some reliability of the student's knowledge of each principle tested.

DIAGNOSTIC CAPABILITIES

This test allows the instructor and the student to determine his knowledge of the eighty-eight principles tested.

PAGE(S) 63-80 ~~WAS~~ (WERE) ~~MISSING~~ (REMOVED) FROM

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

FEB 10 1978

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